

# 15-Passenger Van Safety

30<sup>th</sup> Medical Brigade

# Introduction

- 15-Passenger Vans & Safety Concerns
- Response to NHTSA Report
  - Classroom Training
  - Practical Hands On Training

# Vocabulary

- NHTSA – National Highway Transportation Safety Administration.
- NSC – National Safety Council
- CDL – Commercial Driver's License

# NHTSA Report

- **15-passenger vans have an increased rollover risk under certain conditions**
- **The risk of rollover increases dramatically as the number of occupants increases from fewer than five occupants to over ten passengers.**
- **15-passenger vans (with 10 or more occupants) had a rollover rate in single vehicle crashes that is nearly 3 x the rate of those that were lightly loaded.**

# NHTSA Report (continued)

- **Loading 15-passenger vans causes the center of gravity to shift rearward and upward increasing the likelihood of rollover. Shift in the center of gravity will also increase the potential for loss of control in panic maneuvers.**
- **It is important that the van be operated by experienced drivers, they should understand and be familiar with the handling characteristics of their vans, especially when fully loaded.**

# NHTSA Reports (continued)

- Institutions using 15-passenger vans should require seat belt use at all times.
- Any load placed on the roof will be above the center of gravity of the vehicle and will increase the likelihood of rolling over.

# Accident Facts

- 25% of all driving accidents are the result of excessive speed.
- 70% of driving accidents occur within 25 miles from home.
- 1 out of 4 employees who drive experience an accident while at work.
- Most people know someone who has died in a car accident.

# 15-Passenger Van Facts

- A speed that may be acceptable in a passenger car could be dangerous in a van.
- A 16 passenger vehicle requires a CDL
- You should fill the front seats first. The center of gravity shifts to the rear and upward increasing the likelihood of rollover as capacity increases.
- Soft shoulders and culverts pose a hazard in rural areas.
- The shift in the center of gravity will also increase the potential for loss of control in panic maneuvers.



# Driving Tips

- **For all kinds of vehicles.**
- **Defensive Driving Theories**
- **Dealing with aggressive drivers**
- **Backing the vehicle**
- **Highway driving**
- **City Driving**
- **Rural Driving**
- **Emergency situations**
- **Vehicle accidents**

# Driving Tips for all vehicles

- **Avoid sharp turns.**
- **Avoid excessive speed and abrupt maneuvers.**
- **Don't drive tired.**
- **Don't drive in bad weather**
- **Drive conservatively**
- **Rest stops often (every 2 hrs. recommended)**
- **Wear seat belts**
- **Drive during the day, if possible.**
- **Require someone to be awake in the front seat with the driver on long trips**

# For all vehicles (continued)

- Trip leader to drive lead vehicle and set pace. . .no other vehicle shall pass.
- Obey all laws, signs and speed limits.

# Defensive Driving Theories

- Drive with courtesy
- Be calm when driving
- Concentrate when driving
- Drive cautiously

# Dealing With Aggressive Drivers

- Avoid eye contact.
- Don't cut in front of other drivers.
- Allow fellow drivers to merge
- Don't aggravate fellow drivers with hand gestures.
- Don't tailgate.
- Use your horn sparingly.

# Backing The Vehicle

- Use a spotter
- Back to the left (driver's side)
- Avoid backing up if you miss a ramp/exit.
- Use outside mirrors.

# Highway Driving

- Lane changes and signals.
- Merges
- Blind Spots
- Slow moving vehicles

# City Driving

- **Stop signs**
- **Stop lights**
- **Yield Signs**
- **Signals**
- **Blind spots**
- **Pedestrians**
- **Bicyclist**



# Rural Driving

- Bicyclist
- Walkers
- Deer/Moose
- Soft shoulders
- Culverts
- Curves, hills and narrow roads

# Emergency Situations

- Encountering emergency vehicles
- Headlights go out
- Tire blow out
- Engine failure
- Break Failure

# Vehicle Accident

- **Relax**
- **Never leave the scene of an accident! You must stay until the local police/polizei have arrived.**
- **Also report the accident to the nearest Military Police immediately or as soon as possible.**
- **Never admit fault.**
- **Gather all the facts (date, time, witnesses, phone numbers, etc.). Contact the TMP Motor Pool.**
- **Immediately report all accidents to your Staff Duty NCO and your Unit Safety Officer.**